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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
26 March 1971

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

PAKISTAN

(Situation as of 1200 EST)

1. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has proclaimed East Pakistan the sovereign republic of Bangla Desh, according to a clandestine radio broadcast [redacted] speculate that the independence proclamation may have come from a radio station captured from the army--possibly in the port city of Chittagong. [redacted]

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2. President Yahya's broadcast this morning (EST) to the nation was a tough, no-compromise proclamation against Mujib and his followers. Yahya accused the East Pakistani leader of treason, and he outlawed the Awami League. He praised the restraint thus far displayed by the armed forces in the face of provocations and warned that he would not allow those who had "attacked the solidarity and integrity of the country" to go unpunished. Yahya concluded by announcing that he had decided to ban all political activity throughout the country and was imposing complete press censorship.

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3. There is a virtual blackout of all reporting from East Pakistan, but Indian press reports from neighboring Assam continue to describe the fighting in Dacca and other cities as heavy with many casualties. A clandestine radiobroadcast from East Pakistan claimed that units of the army's East Bengal Regiment, the paramilitary East Pak Rifles, and the "entire police force" are engaging regular army troops. Radio Karachi, however, broadcasting at 1000 EST claimed that the "general situation in the province (of East Pakistan) has been brought well under control."

4. Meanwhile, violence erupted in the West Pakistani city of Lyallpur on 25 March as a result of an attempted general strike called by Z. A. Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples' Party. The army was called in, a curfew imposed, and several PPP leaders have been arrested. Bhutto, last reported in Dacca before the collapse of negotiations among Yahya, Mujib, and himself, has not yet commented on the situation in Lyallpur or on the army's clampdown in East Pakistan. Several leaders of minor political parties in West Pakistan had indicated during the recent negotiations considerable sympathy with Mujib's demands for a settlement. None has been quoted as commenting on the latest events in East Pakistan, but presumably tight censorship would preclude the publication of any criticism of the government action.

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